

increase for Food Stamps and nutrition programs by \$4 billion over the next five years. Among other things, the bill would reform the program by indexing asset limits and eliminate the current cap on childcare costs to help the working poor meet rising costs. This will benefit the estimated 210,000 individuals in Connecticut who receive food stamps every month.

The legislation before us today was a collective effort from members of the House Agriculture Committee who made new investments and important reforms in this Farm Bill. I would like to especially thank Agriculture Committee Chairman COLLIN PETERSON for his leadership in putting forward a comprehensive bill that meets the 21st century needs of the United States and enhances programs in Connecticut. I urge my colleagues to vote for a new direction in our Nation's agriculture policy.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2007

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 748, I was unavoidably absent. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall No. 749, I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall No. 750, I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall No. 751, I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall No. 752, I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall No. 753, I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall No. 754, I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall No. 755, I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall No. 756, I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall No. 757, I would have voted "yea."

FARM, NUTRITION, AND BIOENERGY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2419) to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, today we vote on one of the most critical bills that will come to the floor during the 110th Congress. While essential to farmers and ranchers across the Nation, the Farm Bill also impacts each one of us. Its provisions directly affect school children in this Nation and others, seniors and families struggling to live on fixed incomes, wildlife and wilderness, and international farmers struggling to become viable participants in a global marketplace.

I applaud Chairman PETERSON and the Agriculture Committee for their tireless efforts to produce a compromise bill that dissolves partisan boundaries, and improves upon the 2002 Farm Bill authorization. The bill takes modest steps towards improving commodity programs, by preventing the most wealthy from exploiting this safety net meant for assisting ranchers and farmers whose livelihoods precariously

teeter at the mercy of climate and market fluctuation.

The committee's bill extends and modestly increases funding for effective conservation and food security programs. Conservation programs help farmers to manage their lands in a sustainable manner that positively impacts wildlife, watersheds, and open spaces. Nutrition programs included in the bill bolster the fruits and vegetables industry, by increasing fresh food supplements for schools, children, families, and seniors.

The 2007 Farm Bill also takes initial steps towards redistributing commodity programs to those who need them most. The bill's authorization of new funding for organic farmers, specialty crops, and farmer's markets will assist small farmers in meeting organic standards and in getting their products into local markets.

I applaud the committee for initiating this redistribution of commodity programs and taking unprecedented steps towards expanding funding, outreach, and technical assistance for socially disadvantaged, beginning, and minority farmers. The committee's effort in this area brings the issue of the 2002 Farm Bill's exceptional lack of support for socially disadvantaged, beginning, and minority farmers to light. While an improvement, the bill could do more to affect real change in this area.

One quarter of all farmers participate in commodity programs. Of these, just 10 percent receive 75 percent of all commodity subsidies. Congress must readjust the reach of the farm bill. Too many minority farmers lack access to USDA programs, too many farmworkers transitioning into farm owners lack access to federal safety nets that would help them get on their feet, and too many socially disadvantaged farmers lack access to the tools that would help them maneuver through the maze of commodity programs.

With the reauthorization of the Farm Bill, Congress has the opportunity to make monumental changes to the distribution of agricultural and conservation programs. The Kind amendment would have brought such monumental changes to our Nation's agricultural sector and to the world economy. By gradually removing depression-era subsidies that have turned from a safety net into a security blanket, the Kind amendment would have lowered the federal deficit and redirected money into nutrition, food insecurity, and conservation programs at rates much greater than those outlined in the Farm Bill we are voting on today. The Kind amendment would have almost tripled funding for outreach and technical assistance for socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers, and would have put a moratorium on foreclosures on farms owned by socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers while creating a commission to investigate the causes of foreclosure.

I am proud to have supported the Kind amendment and hope that such comprehensive reform will be possible in the future. Nevertheless, I am pleased that the Agriculture Committee has at least taken initial steps in the direction of reform, and I will vote in support of their 2007 Farm Bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2007

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, on July 26, 2007, I was unable to be present for all rollcall votes due to an unexpected delay.

If present, I would have voted accordingly on the following rollcall votes:

Roll No. 734—"aye."
Roll No. 735—"no."
Roll No. 736—"no."
Roll No. 737—"aye."
Roll No. 738—"aye."
Roll No. 739—"aye."
Roll No. 740—"aye."
Roll No. 741—"aye."
Roll No. 742—"aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2007

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote No. 691, on agreeing to the Mica amendment to H.R. 3074. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1, IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 9/11 COMMISSION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of "H.R. 1 Implementing the 911 Commission Recommendations Conference Report." This report provides an opportunity to enhance the security and protection of our citizens and strengthens our homeland security policy. "Six years after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and three years after the bipartisan and independent 9/11 Commission delivered to the American people a roadmap for security that the Republican Congress had failed to pass into law, the Democratic Congress is about to deliver to the President a bill for his signature to make the American people safer. H.R. 1 will now provide a policy that will allow us to address the gaps that were created when the President decided to underfund many Homeland Security programs and initiatives.

This legislation, which was developed through bipartisan support, is a proactive step in making our country a safer place to live, work, and play. H.R. 1 makes the Nations security a top priority by significantly increasing the share of State homeland security grants provided on the basis of risk; requiring a significant increase in the number of maritime and air cargo containers scanned for weapons of mass destruction; significantly strengthening the Cooperative Threat reduction Program and creating a new National Bio-Surveillance Integration Center, which would support Federal